Drawing blood is one of the most common, yet most stressful, procedures in a hospital. Though it happens dozens if not hundreds of times a day, venipuncture is not without complications: bruising, misses, and redraw lead all to the biggest complications of all—patient pain and complaints.

Tracy Huneke, CP, NPA, CHI, is a manager and course instructor at Griffin Hospital School of Allied Health Careers, with a specialty in phlebotomy training and education.

“Patient care and comfort are our biggest concerns,” said Huneke. “And when blood draws don’t go well, it’s obvious to patients and their families, and it causes real pain and stress.”

Hospitals also must administer Medicare-mandated surveys checking on the overall patient experience. Low scores on these surveys count against them and can reduce Medicare reimbursements.

“After we improved training and implemented NHA certifications, patient satisfaction with blood draws increased dramatically. We saw big improvements in skills and confidence levels. Patients were happier and so were our employees.”

When Huneke arrived at Griffin Hospital eight years ago, increasing patient satisfaction with blood draws was a priority. One of her first steps towards improvement was a new training program. Her next step was to introduce more formal testing and certification to make sure the training was working.

Huneke and her colleagues selected National Healthcareer Association (NHA) as the allied health certification provider for phlebotomists and patient care technicians. The training and certifications paid off quickly.

“After we improved training, and our staff sat for NHA certifications, patient satisfaction with blood draws increased dramatically,” said Huneke. “We saw big improvements in skills and confidence levels. Patients were happier and so were our employees.”

Huneke said NHA’s Phlebotomy Technician certification helps them with staffing flexibility and care quality since technicians can simply do more with their enhanced training.

“Our technicians are better prepared to handle a variety of patient care tasks, and morale and retention is better, too, when they have more education and training,” said Huneke.

In 1992, Griffin Hospital instituted Planetree, an innovative model of healthcare that puts patients’ needs first. Griffin Hospital is the flagship of the Planetree network that is made up of hundreds of hospitals in the United States, Canada, South America, Japan, and the Netherlands.

Griffin Hospital’s commitment to excellence also has been recognized by numerous third-party authorities including the Joint Commission, The Leapfrog Group, American Heart Association, and Angie’s List.

Huneke uses NHA in the School of Allied Health with new students. The school is known throughout Connecticut for turning out high-quality graduates who are prepared to deliver the best care.

“We want to deliver the best patient experience and care that we possibly can,” said Huneke. “NHA has been an important part of our success. With their certification structure and metrics, we’re able to help individuals achieve their career goals which, in turn, helps us achieve our facility goals. It’s a positive, continuous cycle.”

CERTIFIED SUCCESS
Hospital, Employees, and Patients Win with Better Training and Better Care

Griffin Hospital and its School of Allied Health Careers educate some of the best patient care technicians and phlebotomists in Connecticut. National Healthcareer Association provides nationally-recognized certifications that help keep quality of care, and patient satisfaction, high.

Improving Support, Certification, and Outcomes

Improving Care at Griffin Hospital: How Patients and Employees Win

► Improving patient satisfaction with blood draws at Griffin Hospital was a priority.

► New training and new allied health certifications by NHA boosted staff confidence, morale, and most important of all, patient care.

► Patient satisfaction with blood draws has increased dramatically, staffing productivity is higher due to phlebotomy technician certification, and Griffin Hospital is consistently recognized as a top healthcare provider in the industry.